FBI finding doesn't surprise policeman

By SCOTT PARKS

Jim Bowles, a 30-year veteran with the Dallas Police Department, said he was not surprised when told Monday the FBI has discounted the House Assassination Committee's conclusion that two gunmen killed President Kennedy in 1963.

"I'm not surprised one bit," said Bowles, who was the DPD communications supervisor the day of the assassination. "That's the only thing that a complete investigation would have found."

Bowles said the committee made a serious mistake in 1978 when it based its conclusion that the president was shot by more than one person on "acoustical evidence" taken from a DPD recording that purportedly carried the sounds of four gunshots — including one from the infamous grassy knoll.

The committee found the recording was made when motorcycle patrolman H.B. McLain's microphone was stuck the moment gunshots were fired at Dealey Plaza.

McLain was riding his motorcycle in the presidential motorcade Nov. 22, 1963.

Bowles, 51, who now is a captain in the police department's community services division, said he can prove the recording came not from McLain's motorcycle at Dealey Plaza but from the motorcycle of another officer who was at the Dallas Trade Mart at the time of the shooting.

Bowles said he never was given "the luxury" of presenting his evidence to the house committee.

"I can prove it," he said, "but no one has ever given me a chance. They (the committee) went the other way after I talked with one of their investigators. They, by gosh, were going to have their acoustical evidence."

The committee seized upon the Dictabelt recording — discovered in 1978 — and found acoustical analysts to support its theory that at least two gunmen were involved in the president's slaying, Bowles said. Bowles would not reveal the name of the other officer, from whose microphone he claims the recording was taken.

"He's retired now, and I would back off the whole thing before I would reveal his name," Bowles said. "It could be dangerous to his family."

Bowles said he was interviewed extensively by the FBI when the agency was conducting its own acoustical analysis of the crucial 17-year-old tape recording, and he said the agents believed his story.

"The committee's evidence just wouldn't wash," he said.